



# PTA Handbook

Hillsmere Elementary School  
3052 Arundel on the Bay Road  
Annapolis, MD 21403

Can you hear the BUZZzzzzzzzz?



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[www.hillsmerepta.org](http://www.hillsmerepta.org)

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HillsmerePTA



@hillsmerepta

**Check out the Bulletin Board in the Lobby!**

**Join the PTA**

[HESPTAMembership@gmail.com](mailto:HESPTAMembership@gmail.com)



**PTA<sup>®</sup>**

*everychild.one voice.<sup>®</sup>*



## FUN IDEAS TO SUPPORT

# HILLSMERE



### PLEDGE 3 HOURS

Big or small, everyone can make a difference! Pledge to contribute three hours this year and help strengthen our kids' educational & emotional well-being.



### CLASSROOM SUPPORT

Be a Room Parent. Volunteer for Reading Time. Be a Chaperone on a Field Trip. Help the kids create their class Fun Fair auction item.



### CHEER ON ALL KIDS

Reality is not all parents/guardians can be present at all activities. Whether its on the soccer field, on stage, or writing a story, show support for all our kids. It matters!



### GIVE TEACHERS LOVE TOO

Let our teachers know how much they mean to us! Use DonorChoose.org to support a classroom project or materials. Promote a class activity through social media. Send the teacher a thank you note. Give them a high five. Just as with our kids - it matters!



### COME DINE OUT

Take a night off from cooking each month and come dine out. Connect with friends and classmates, enjoy some good food, and support our local restaurants. Portions of every purchase support Hillsmere! It's a WIN WIN WIN all around!



### RIDE-SHARE

Coming to a family fun night? Grabbing a meal on a Dining Night Out? Attending a PTA meeting? Help with transportation: Offer a ride to a fellow parent/family!



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Welcome to Hillsmere Elementary!

Since 1967, Hillsmere has built on the school's rich history while continually striving toward an excellent future for our children.

Through the Hillsmere PTA, students, families, and staff can play a vital role in the success of our school. The PTA is a valued partnership between our remarkable teachers, amazing staff and wonderfully committed families, all under the leadership of our dedicated principal, Kimberly Terry. By working together, we can enrich our children's education in so many beneficial ways.

Thank you to all the volunteers who have already committed to serving this school year. Your time spent in the classroom, cafeteria, library, or serving on one of our many PTA committees, is greatly appreciated. The financial generosity of our families (and communities) also allows us to better enhance our school, fund enrichment activities, family fun nights, technology upgrades, teacher training opportunities, and so much more. We are very grateful for the countless volunteer hours and level of support you give to Hillsmere.

We encourage you to review this handbook and take advantage of the numerous opportunities available to support our school. Consider pledging at least three hours of your time during the school year - whether it's at home or at school, whatever you do helps make Hillsmere the special school it is!

Best regards,

The Hillsmere PTA



# PTA Mission, Purpose, and Values

## Hillsmere PTA Mission

To promote the welfare of children and establish a strong tie between home and school, encouraging cooperation of parents and teachers in educating our children. We strive to be a powerful voice for all children and advocate for the education and well-being of every child.

## Maryland PTA Purpose

To make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. We accomplish this by:

- Supporting and speaking on behalf of children in the schools, in the community, and before government bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;
- Assisting parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children; and
- Encouraging parents and public involvement in our schools.

## National PTA Values

- **Collaboration:** We will work in partnership with a wide array of individuals and organizations to broaden and enhance our ability to serve and advocate for all children and families.
- **Commitment:** We are dedicated to children's educational success, health, and well-being through strong family and community engagement, while remaining accountable to the principles upon which our association was founded.
- **Diversity:** We acknowledge the potential of everyone without regard, including but not limited to: age, culture, economic status, educational background, ethnicity, gender, geographic location, legal status, marital status, mental ability, national origin, organizational position, parental status, physical ability, political philosophy, race, religion, sexual orientation, and work experience.
- **Respect:** We value the individual contributions of members, employees, volunteers, and partners as we work collaboratively to achieve our association's goals.
- **Accountability:** All members, employees, volunteers, and partners have a shared responsibility to align their efforts toward the achievement of our association's strategic initiatives.



IF THE PLAN DOESN'T  
WORK, CHANGE THE PLAN  
BUT **NEVER** THE GOAL.

# Hillsmere PTA Board and Committees

## PTA Board

*Per our Bylaws, the Hillsmere PTA Board is comprised of six elected PTA officers, Hillsmere's Principal (or his/her representative), and all (co)chairs of standing committees. All standing committees will be marked with a "\*".*

Position/Committee/Activity
Hillsmere Principal
President <a href="mailto:hesptapres@gmail.com">hesptapres@gmail.com</a>
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President (Enrichment) <a href="mailto:hesptavp@gmail.com">hesptavp@gmail.com</a>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President (Membership) <a href="mailto:hesptamember@gmail.com">hesptamember@gmail.com</a>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice President (Equity and Diversity) <a href="mailto:hesptaequity@gmail.com">hesptaequity@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer <a href="mailto:hesptatres@gmail.com">hesptatres@gmail.com</a>
Secretary <a href="mailto:hesptasec@gmail.com">hesptasec@gmail.com</a>
Advocacy Committee*
Boosterton Coordinator
Box Tops Coordinator
The Buzz Editor*
Class Support Committee
Clubs Committee*
Communications Committee
Dining Nights Out Coordinator
Drama Program Coordinator
Environmental Committee*
Equity and Diversity Committee*
Family Fun Nights Committee
FUNdraising Committee*
Holiday Bazaar Coordinator
Publications Committee*
Membership Committee*
Ripley Race Coordinator
School Supplies Coordinator
Spirit Wear Coordinator
STEM/STEAM Committee*
Teacher Appreciation Committee
Volunteer Coordinator <a href="mailto:hesptavc@gmail.com">hesptavc@gmail.com</a>
Wreaths Across America Coordinator

# How the PTA Supports Hillsmere

## PTAs Can Benefit Our Children (and School) By:

- Strengthening the family through school/community partnerships
- Sponsoring family-oriented events and activities
- Raising awareness on issues affecting children in and out of the community
- Encouraging the exchange of ideas/thoughts by connecting with staff, other parents, and community members
- Influencing legislative and policy issues affecting our children at the local, state and federal levels

*"When parents come to school regularly, it reinforces the view in the child's mind that school and home are connected and that school is an integral part of the whole family's"*

**Statistics do matter.** Decades of research shows that when parents are involved in their children's education, the children are more likely to:

- Earn better grades, score higher on tests, and pass their classes
- Complete homework assignments
- Attend school regularly
- Strengthen their social skills and show improved behaviour
- Be more positive in their attitude toward school
- Graduate and pursue higher education

One study found students from families with above-average parent involvement were 30% more successful in school than those with below-average involvement. Another study found that in schools where teachers reported high levels of outreach to parents, test scores grew at a rate 40% higher than in schools that reported low levels of outreach to parents.

## ***It's not just about "Do it for the Kids"!***

When parents become involved in their children's education, the parents are more likely to:

- Be more confident at school
- Establish stronger communication avenues with teachers and staff
- Be more confident in themselves as parents and their ability to help their children learn
- Be held in higher esteem by teachers and have teachers expect more from their children
- Enrol in continuing education to advance their own schooling

**And the research data applied to all parents (or guardians), regardless of ethnicity, bank balance, work schedule, education level, or anything else!**

**Strong Schools = Stronger Communities**





## PTA Sponsored Activities A-Z

- **Awards:**

- The Jennifer Summers Barrett Memorial Award: Annual Volunteer of the Year award
- Power of Your Hour: Recognizing a special volunteer each month
- Club scholarships: The PTA offers two scholarships per year for each club. \*Exceptions for clubs that already offer scholarships.

- **Back to School Night:** The PTA supports Hillsmere's Back to School Night with a welcome to all parents, Spirit Wear table, and information on upcoming clubs and events.

- **Backpack Buddies:** Thanks to (very) generous community funding and man-hours, students who qualify for free and reduced meals are provided food on the weekend and summer



- **Book Fairs:** Hillsmere sponsors two Book Fairs each year (Fall and Spring).

- **Boosterthon** – One of our biggest fundraisers where students get daily character presentations leading up to the fun run day! All students participate and get classroom rewards during Boosterthon week.

- **Clubs:** Visit [www.hillsmerepta.org](http://www.hillsmerepta.org) for updates as new clubs are added! Past clubs include:

- Chess Club: Grades 3-5
- Coding Club: Coding sessions for Grades K-2 and 3-5
- Compass Rose Theater: Grades K-5
- Lego Robotics League: Ages 6-10
- MESA: County-supported club supporting Mathematics, Engineering, and Science. Grades 3-5
- Overtime Athletics: Athletic programs for Grades K-2 and 3-5.
- Yoga: Grades K-5

- **Classroom Support:** The PTA allots funds for classroom supplies, supports room parents, and assists with classroom activities such as reading groups, math assistance, STEM activities, and holiday parties.

- **Dining Night Out Events:** Monthly PTA fundraiser that builds community relationships.

- **Family Fun Nights:** Fun evening events held throughout the year with various educational and family engagement themes.

- **Field Day:** A decades-old tradition at Hillsmere, the PTA helps recruit volunteers and provide kids with a cool treat during this fun day in June.

- **Field Trip Support:** The PTA allocates funds to assist with field trips for each grade and funds the majority of the cost of the 5th Grade County Drownproofing class.

- **5th Grade Promotion Events:** 4th Grade parents sponsor a reception after the 5th Grade Promotion.

- **Find Your Seat:** Hillsmere's annual Find Your Seat gets an extra treat (Kona Ice) for all those who come.

- **Fun Fair:** We put FUN into this annual event with games, food, a silent auction, and great activities!



- **Hillsmere Publishing Company:** Volunteer-runned literacy initiative to encourage our students to find the author within them; through self-written/published books, radio programming, and student newspaper activities.



- **Holiday Bazaar:** Volunteers collect gently used items and purchase inexpensive items for students to “shop” for holiday gifts at school. Volunteers also wrap the students’ gifts to bring home.
- **Grandfriends Day:** Spring-time event to encourage grandparents and other relatives/relations to participate in fun bonding/learning activities at Hillsmere.
- **Landscaping/Maintenance of the School Sign:** Volunteers update the school sign with important upcoming dates and maintain the landscaping around the sign.
- **Mids for Kids:** PTA funds transportation and/or recruits volunteers to transport USNA midshipmen to/from Hillsmere to help mentor students.
- **Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Incentives:** The PTA provides special treats and gifts to students taking PARCC in the spring.



- **PBIS Initiatives:** The PTA incorporates monthly PBIS themes into activities, along with funding incentives for the weekly Hornet Heroes.

- **Principal Initiatives:** The PTA allots funding each year for Hillsmere’s principal to use when needed.
- **Ripley Race:** Annual race in November to support wounded veterans. Along with students, staff, and parents bonding, Hillsmere’s teams have received monetary rewards by placing in the top three since 2012.
- **Spiritwear:** Hillsmere spirit items (e.g., t-shirts, bags) are sold at PTA-sponsored and school events.
- **STEM Cart:** The PTA allots funds/solicits donations for to a STEM Cart, a special resource travelling to all classrooms to support fun and innovative STEM projects.
- **Student Assemblies:** The PTA allots funds for four student assemblies/year.
- **Summer Meet & Greet:** Hillsmere’s annual gathering for new/old families to network with the principal and other staff in August.
- **Teacher/Staff Appreciation:** The PTA recognizes staff for their hard work throughout the year.
- **Teacher Professional Development:** The PTA allots funds to support staff professional development.
- **Variety Show/Musical:** Since 2016, the PTA has sponsored Hillsmere’s annual variety show or musical. All ages, all abilities, make for a fabulous “swarm” of talent each year.
- **Wake Up Challenge Breakfast:** Encouraging bonding through writing or STEM activities, the PTA hosts a 30-minute morning session prior to school for adults to work with the student(s) on the activity in the cafeteria. The event is divided into two sessions during the fall: Grades K-2 and Grade 3-5.



## Get Involved with the PTA

### Can I join the Hillsmere PTA?

YES, YOU CAN! Anyone can become a member of our PTA – at any time of the year: family, teachers, school administrators, friends, community members, and businesses!

### I can't come to PTA Meetings – why should I join?

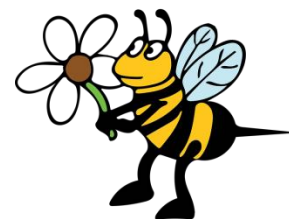
The PTA is about so much more than just attending membership meetings – in fact, the meetings are the least of our priorities. Here are **some great reasons to be part of Hillsmere's PTA:**

- **Be in the Know:** Keep up with what is happening at Hillsmere and how you can support your child's education. Increased awareness of challenges schools face lets you *become part of the solution*.
- **Speak Up:** Exchange ideas, suggestions and any concerns. Your input can influence change at Hillsmere. Vote on PTA issues.
- **Build relationships:** Connect with other families (and staff) through meetings, events, and communications, and foster a sense of community.
- **Automatic membership with [Anne Arundel County Council of PTAs](#), [Maryland PTA](#), and the [National PTA:](#)** Access resources on important PTA topics, including parent involvement, student success, student safety, and health and wellness.

### What exactly can I do to help Hillsmere/support the PTA?

Joining the PTA is just the first step towards strengthening our Hillsmere family. There are dozens ways you can help support our students at Hillsmere, including:

- Join a PTA Committee/Be a PTA Officer
- Be a Room Parent
- Volunteer to read to your child's class or help the kids design the class's Fun Fair auction item
- Come have lunch in the cafeteria during your child's birthday
- Ensure our students' safety by volunteering to be present during an after-school club your child is in. It lets the instructor instruct while ensuring kids get to/from the club location, go to the restroom, etc.
- Help man tables, run games, handle tickets, oversee food, etc. during our Fun Fair, 5K Run, Field Day, or other events during the year
- Volunteer as a chaperone on a field trip
- Help with the landscaping/garden
- Come in for an hour to help make copies
- Ask your child's teacher if there are projects to work on at home
- Help cut up the "Buzz Bucks"
- Attend a County Board of Education meeting – advocate for our students and Hillsmere
- Help translate PTA materials into other languages
- Say "Thank You" to the front office staff
- Design new graphics for Spiritwear
- Come speak about your experiences/background during events like Career Day or Black History Month
- Promote Hillsmere activities in your community or business
- Think of how your own talents/interests can support Hillsmere!



### **How do I join the Hillsmere PTA?**

Joining the PTA is easy. Simply join online (<http://www.hillsmerepta.org>) or fill out the membership registration form found on the last page of this handbook. Annual dues are \$10 per member. Remember – anyone can join at any time of the year. Contact our VP of Membership at [hesptamember@gmail.com](mailto:hesptamember@gmail.com) with questions.

### **How can I sign up to help with an activity?**

- Check out the PTA website: <http://www.hillsmerepta.org>
- Contact our volunteer coordinator at [hesptavc@gmail.com](mailto:hesptavc@gmail.com)
- Sign up for the Buzz Newsletter to have weekly emails
- Look for paper signup sheets in Wednesday folders



### **How can I log in volunteer hours?**

Did you know volunteer hours can impact grants and other funding resources? Logging in your hours is critical – email the PTA volunteer coordinator, or submit a hard copy of your hours to the PTA. Every 15 minutes counts – whether at a school activity or PTA meeting or preparing for one. LOG LOG LOG!

### **How can I request reimbursements?**

Have a receipt for something you bought on behalf of the PTA? Submit all requests for reimbursements online.

### **I have this awesome event/club/project that the kids would love- how do I get PTA support?**

All PTA events/activities – especially those requesting PTA funding – need to be reviewed through a “Plan of Work”. You can access the Plan of Work form online.

### **Does the PTA have a volunteer ethic code? Yes!**

*As a volunteer I realize that I am subject to a code of ethics similar to that which binds that professional in the field in which I volunteer. Like them, I assume certain responsibilities and I expect to account for what I do in terms of what I am expected to do.*

- Confidentiality: The volunteer is a member of the professional team. A volunteer will protect a students’ right to privacy. The volunteer should not discuss the student, his/her school work, test scores, report cards, or other private information.
- Dependability/Punctuality: The time that a teacher has for a student is very limited. Effective use of every minute is necessary if students are to receive the education to which they are entitled. A volunteer shall be responsible for his/her scheduled times. Volunteers are expected to inform the teacher, school office, or event organizer if unable to meet specific responsibilities, or to be in when expected.
- Respect: A volunteer must respect the school and school personnel. Volunteers must also show respect to the students whom they are serving.
- Objectivity: A volunteer must not allow his/her personal feelings to affect his/her work in the school setting. A volunteer’s first priority is to the students they are serving.
- Impartiality: A volunteer shall favor no one side or party more than another in all school situations.
- Appearance: A volunteer shall dress appropriately, always remembering that he/she is setting an example for the students at Hillsmere.
- Discipline: Volunteers shall not administer or be responsible for discipline of students in any way.

## How Can I Advocate for my Child(ren) and/or Hillsmere?

- **Attend County Board of Education Meetings.** Click [here](#) for the Board's calendar of meetings and contact information. *Note: The Public Comment portion of Board meetings is reserved for items NOT on the agenda. The public can also comment on agenda items at the time the item is before the Board. In both cases, all speakers are limited to 3 minutes.*
  - **Watch County Board of Education Meetings live at** <https://livestream.com/accounts/10415590>.
- **Contact the [County Executive](#) and his/her [Education Advisor](#)**
- **Contact our [County Council Representative](#)**
- **Write a Letter to the Editor.** For submissions to *The Capital*: 250 words or less (include address & daytime phone number). [Click here to submit online](#), email [capletts@capgaznews.com](mailto:capletts@capgaznews.com), or send to Letters to the Editor, 888 Bestgate Road, Suite 104, Annapolis, MD 21401.
- **[The Annapolis Education Commission](#)** (AEC) is the liaison with the City of Annapolis, County Board of Education, and other elected officials on education issues. Individuals are encouraged to attend meetings and share their concerns and suggestions about education in the Annapolis cluster.
- **[The Citizen Advisory Committee](#)** (CAC) is a committee appointed by the County Board of Education that provides advice to the Board on specific issues impacting educational policy, activities, and programs. The CAC is composed of county residents who represent the diversity of parents and citizens in the county. Contact our own Erin Snell (Annapolis Cluster Elementary School Representative) or [CAC@aacps.org](mailto:CAC@aacps.org) for more information.
- **Talk to the PTA's Advocacy Committee**



### Are there any guidelines for Advocacy through the PTA?

#### Do's:

- PTAs can lobby in support of or opposition to federal, state or local legislation.
- PTAs can conduct educational activities and prepare and distribute educational materials on legislation (articles in newsletters, flyers, etc.).
- PTAs can conduct public forums in an effort to educate its members regarding the details of a specific issue or piece of legislation.
- PTAs can conduct public candidate forums but must see that all candidates are invited. This event cannot show any support or opposition to a specific candidate.

#### Don'ts:

- PTAs cannot participate in political campaigns (written or verbal) in favor of or in opposition to an individual candidate for public office.
- PTAs cannot participate in political fundraising activities.
- PTAs cannot distribute materials for or against a legislative issue through the students, or from carpool lines (but may at PTA meetings, regardless of where held).

## How Does the PTA Raise Money?

Hillsmere's PTA raises money through several methods:

- **PTA Membership Dues:** \$10 per person. [Corporate memberships](#) are also available.

- **Amazon Smile:** How often do you shop on Amazon? Did you know you can donate to Hillsmere with every purchase and never pay more? Simply go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) every time you visit Amazon and make sure Hillsmere PTA is your listed charity.



**Save**  **Please!**

Every clip counts



- **Boxtops:** Turn in your Boxtops labels from products you buy and the PTA will get funds for the school.

- **Dining Out:** The PTA is given a portion of the proceeds collected by various restaurants during designated times that the Hillsmere Elementary community is invited to dine. Dining Out Nights are held monthly.

- **Donations:** Hillsmere PTA is a federally recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Any individual can donate to support our effort: Donate online at <http://www.hillsmerepta.org/donate> or submit cash/check. Make checks out to "Hillsmere PTA".
- **Family 5K and 1 Mile Fun Run/Walk:** Our annual fun run raises money for Backpack Buddies.
- **Fun Fair and Silent Auction:** This is our biggest fundraising event of the year, where families can come to the school to play carnival style games, participate in fun activities, eat great food and just have a fantastic time! Our Silent Auction is filled with unique merchandise and entertainment opportunities.
- **Grant Writing:** The PTA always is considering grants for many different funding needs. All grant opportunities are welcome.
- **Partnerships with local stores:** The PTA is given a portion of the proceeds when a member of Hillsmere purchases items from that store (e.g., TrueValue).
  - Giant: go to [giantfood.com/aplus](http://giantfood.com/aplus) The Hillsmere ID is **01689**
  - Target: go to [target.com/redcard](http://target.com/redcard) The Hillsmere ID is **57370**
- **Ripley Race:** The PTA receives a monetary reward if the Hillsmere Team places in the top three.
- **School Supplies:** The PTA partners with a school supply organization each spring to make ordering school supplies for the upcoming school year easy and quick. The PTA receives a portion of the proceeds.



**Wreaths Across America:** The PTA receives a portion of the proceeds each time a wreath is purchased (under Hillsmere's name) to place on the gravesite of a deceased veteran.

# Resources

## *Local Resources*

- Hillsmere Elementary School Website: <https://www.aacps.org/Page/4493>
- Hillsmere Twitter: <https://twitter.com/HillsmereESAACP>
- Hillsmere Parent Business Directory: <http://www.hillsmerepta.org/directory/>
- AACPS website: <https://www.aacps.org/aacps>
- AACPS Policies and Regulations: <http://aacpschools.org/boardpolicies/>

## *State and National Resources*

- [Maryland General Assembly](#)
- [Maryland State Government](#)
- [Maryland State Department of Education](#) (MSDE)
- [Maryland School Assessment Report](#) (MSA scores by school)
- [School Improvement in Maryland](#) (school reforms)
- [NEA: National Education Association](#)
- Follow @NationalPTA on Twitter
- [National PTA Advocacy Toolkit](#)
- [National PTA Election Guide](#) (Guidelines during public elections)
- [Pinterest](#) - Follow National PTA on Pinterest for the latest ideas
- [Reflections Arts Program](#) PTA Reflections is a nationally acclaimed student recognition program to encourage artistic creativity in the classroom and at home
- [Connect for Respect](#) National PTA's initiative to help students, parents and educators to create school climates full of safe and supportive peer relationships
- [Safety Toolkit](#)
- [Special Education Toolkit](#)
- [National PTA STEM](#)

Hillsmere   
Elementary

# Appendix 1: How Meetings Are Run

*Whether you are at a Board, Committee, or General Membership meeting, certain procedures are in place to ensure that certain decisions are made with structure and consistency.*

Like many other non-profit organizations, Hillsmere PTA runs its meetings based on practices outlined in Robert's Rules of Order. Below is a summary of what Robert's Rules of Order are and how to use them in meetings.

**Robert's Rules of Order** are a set of parliamentary procedures used by governments, companies, non-profit organizations, and other groups throughout the world.

## **What is Parliamentary Procedure?**

Parliamentary Procedures are a set of rules for conduct during meetings. Parliamentary procedures are used to make sure everyone gets heard, no one dominates, and ideas are fully explored before majority rules through voting.

## **What is a normal schedule for a meeting?**

Organizations using parliamentary procedure usually follow a fixed outline, usually called an agenda, to run meetings.

Typical Agenda:

1. Call to order (Start of the meeting)
2. Roll call of members present (See who is there)
3. Approval of minutes of last meeting
4. Officer reports
5. Committee reports
6. Old business
7. New business
8. Announcements
9. Adjournment (End of the meeting)

## **How to get the group to decide on something?**

Groups can only vote on an issue once a "motion" is "moved". Overall, individual members can:

1. "Move" to propose an idea/issue
2. Second the motion
3. Debate/Discuss the motion
4. Vote on the motion

## **What is a motion?**

A motion is a proposal or idea put before the group to take action on.

## **There are four basic types of motions:**

1. **Main Motions:** The purpose of a main motion is to introduce items to the membership for their consideration. They cannot be made when any other motion is on the floor, and yield to privileged, subsidiary, and incidental motions.
2. **Subsidiary Motions:** Their purpose is to change or affect how a main motion is handled, and is voted on before a main motion.
3. **Privileged Motions:** Their purpose is to bring up items that are urgent about special or important matters unrelated to pending business.
4. **Incidental Motions:** Their purpose is to provide a means of questioning procedure concerning other motions and must be considered before the other motion.

## **What is moving a motion?**

Moving a motion simply means that a person puts the issue/proposal on the floor for the group to discuss and/or act on.



## **OK, I have something to bring up – how do I actually start the process?**

1. Obtaining the floor
  - a. Wait until the last speaker has finished.
  - b. Rise and address the Chairman/President by saying, "Mr./Madam Chairman, or Mr./Madam President."
  - c. Wait until the Chairman/President recognizes you.
2. Make Your Motion
  - a. Speak in a clear and concise manner.
  - b. Always state a motion affirmatively. Say, "I move that we ..." rather than, "I move that we do not ...".
  - c. Avoid personalities and stay on your subject.
3. Wait for Someone to Second Your Motion
  - a. Another member will second your motion or the Chairman/President will call for a second.
4. If there is no second to your motion it will not move to a discussion.
5. If seconded, the Chairman/President states your motion
  - a. The Chairman/President will say, "It has been moved and seconded that we ..." This places your motion before the group for consideration and action.
  - b. The group then either debates your motion, or may move directly to a vote.
  - c. Once your motion is presented to the group it becomes "assembly property", and cannot be changed by you without the consent of the members.
6. Expanding on Your Motion
  - a. The time for you to speak in favor of your motion is at this point in time, rather than at the time you present it.
  - b. The person that "moves" the motion is always allowed to speak first.
  - c. All comments and debate must be directed to the Chairman/President.
  - d. Keep to the time limit for speaking that has been established.
  - e. The mover may speak again only after other speakers are finished, unless called upon by the Chairman/President.
7. Putting the Question to the Membership
  - a. The Chairman/President asks, "Are you ready to vote on the motion?"
  - b. If there is no more discussion, a vote is taken.

## **Voting on a Motion:**

The method of vote on any motion depends on the situation and the by-laws of policy of the organization. There are five methods used to vote by most organizations, although the Hillsmere PTA usually uses #1 or #3:

1. By Voice -- The Chairman/President asks those in favor to say, "aye", those opposed to say "no". Any member may move for an exact count.
2. By Roll Call -- Each member answers "yes" or "no" as his name is called. This method is used when a record of each person's vote is required.
3. By General Consent -- When a motion is not likely to be opposed, the Chairman/President says, "if there is no objection ..." The membership shows agreement by their silence, however if one member says, "I object," the item must be put to a vote.
4. By Division -- This is a slight verification of a voice vote. It does not require a count unless the Chairman/President so desires. Members raise their hands or stand.
5. By Ballot -- Members write their vote on a slip of paper, this method is used when secrecy is desired.

## **There are two other motions that are commonly used that relate to voting.**

- Motion to Table -- This motion is often used in the attempt to "kill" a motion. The option is always present, however, to "take from the table", for reconsideration by the membership.
- Motion to Postpone Indefinitely -- This is often used as a means of parliamentary strategy and allows opponents of motion to test their strength without an actual vote being taken. Also, debate is once again open on the main motion.

*Even though the Hillsmere PTA runs its meetings in a more informal setting, we have included the following summary of all motions as reference – should you ever wish to raise one at a meeting. “§” indicates section from Robert’s Rules.*

**Part 1 Main Motions:** These motions are listed in order of precedence. A motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion.

§	PURPOSE:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§21	Close meeting	I move to adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§20	Take break	I move to recess for ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§19	Register complaint	I rise to a question of privilege	Yes	No	No	No	None
§18	Make group follow the agenda	I call for the orders of the day	Yes	No	No	No	None
§17	Lay aside temporarily	I move to lay the question on the table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§16	Close debate/discussion	I move the previous question	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§15	Limit or extend debate	I move that debate be limited to ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
§14	Postpone to a certain time	I move to postpone the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§13	Refer to committee	I move to refer the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§12	Modify wording of motion	I move to amend the motion by ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§11	Kill main motion	I move that the motion be postponed indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
§10	Bring business/issue before group (a main motion)	I move that [or "to"] ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

**Part 2 Incidental Motions.** No order of precedence. These motions arise incidentally and are decided immediately.

§	PURPOSE:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§23	Enforce rules	Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	None
§24	Submit matter to assembly	I appeal from the decision of the chair	Yes	Yes	Varies	No	Majority
§25	Suspend rules	I move to suspend the rules	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§26	Avoid main motion altogether	I object to the consideration of the question	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
§27	Divide motion	I move to divide the question	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§29	Demand a rising vote	I move for a rising vote	Yes	No	No	No	None
§33	Parliamentary law question	Parliamentary inquiry	Yes	No	No	No	None
§33	Request for information	Point of information	Yes	No	No	No	None

**Part 3 Motions That Bring Back A Question.** No order of precedence. Introduce only when nothing else is pending.

§	PURPOSE:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§34	Take matter from table	I move to take from the table ...	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§35	Cancel previous action	I move to rescind ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3 or Majority with notice
§37	Reconsider motion	I move to reconsider ...	No	Yes	Varies	No	Majority

## Appendix 2: PTA Leadership Overview

Thank you for volunteering your time to help lead Hillsmere's PTA. Whether you are a PTA Officer, Board member, or Committee Chair, you are in a great position to help children and families succeed! Your leadership will motivate volunteers and persuade local decision makers. Because of you and your fellow PTA members, Hillsmere will be more successful. **By volunteering to help lead Hillsmere's PTA, you just became a role model to our children and community!**

### *Why do we have a Board of Directors and Committees?*

- A Board of Director is the body that makes final decisions on most administrative items.
- Committees serve as an important means to actively involve members (board and non-board) in the PTA's work, and for leadership to emerge.
- Most PTAs have committees because smaller groups can work more efficiently and less formally.
- Committees play a helpful role in building teamwork among larger boards. While committees require administrative management from the PTA President and other Board members, committees also divvy up tasks and expertise efficiently.
- In some cases, an ad hoc committee or task force is formed to complete a particular task within a few months. Many people feel more comfortable signing on to a temporary, ad hoc committee than to a permanent standing committee.

### *General PTA Practices*

PTA Leaders shall:

- Welcome all families, school staff and community members in a way that values their unique strengths, abilities and interests. PTA leaders are intentional, authentic and inclusive.
- Communicate effectively by listening and deeply understanding the perspectives of students, families, teachers, and administrators; communicating frequently and through a variety of methods—including personal outreach; and welcoming feedback.
- Focus on student success by planning PTA programs based on what's most important to support student achievement and well-being.
- Identify and advocate for specific school improvements. PTA leaders serve as a resource for parents, helping them navigate the school and community and speak up for their students' unique needs.
- Create a PTA Board that works like a team—sharing power and growing the volunteer pool with different perspectives; resolving conflicts in a positive, productive way; showing children by example how teamwork can make their world a better place.
- Collaborate with outside organizations or companies and provide a critical link between families, the school and the community. PTA leaders are the champions of school community and pride.
- Know your own personal "why". Why you were attracted to PTA and why you stay engaged as a PTA leader. Share your story widely and often.

### *Overview of Voting Power*

- As a PTA member, you have the right to vote on every issue presented before the General Membership. You have the same rights at Board meetings (if a member of the PTA Board) or at committee meetings (if a committee member). Voting is saying yes or no to a proposal – or deciding not to take a side (abstaining) – based on what YOU believe. As long as you are present at a meeting, you have the same right to vote as every other member at the meeting. If you are not at a meeting, you still have a right to vote by asking a fellow member, who will be at the meeting, to voice your vote (called a proxy vote). Proxy votes should be authorized in writing.
  - Not a member of the PTA, Board or on a committee? You still have the right to attend, and speak, at any meeting. You just cannot vote.
- The PTA Board has the power to make decisions for the organization on items outline in our bylaws.
- Committees have the power to make certain decisions designated by the Board.

## General PTA Leadership Norms

Hillsmere PTA Board of Directors and Committee Members must:

- Act in the best interest of the PTA.
- Listen and respond to all inquiries. Provide answers or direct the person to the proper point of contact or resource.
- Refer all questions on school policy to Hillsmere's administration.
- Not share confidential information.
- Focus on our PTA's mission and reputation.
  - Posting on social media? Follow the Maryland PTA motto of "Pause, Think, Post". Keep things positive.
- Make decisions based on what is best for the PTA, not whether or not he/she or their family will benefit.
  - Disclose if he/she or their family stand to gain financially by a decision.
  - Abstain from voting and from sharing "insider information" if he/she has a close personal interest in the results of the decision.
- Facilitating a meeting? Whether the PTA President or a Committee Chair, always maintain impartiality during any meeting or discussion. Yes, you can share your own thoughts during a discussion but if that discussion turns into a debate, you also should ensure that all participants have a fair opportunity to express their points of view. If need be, incorporate Robert's Rules into meetings – those rules are designed to assist you and allow all sides to be heard and then majority to decide.

What if I feel like I am being the "bad guy"?  
Remember that it is your role and responsibility to be fair and efficient and to keep meetings/discussions on target. At times, this requires that you be firm.

## PTA Committee Practices

Committees are designated in two ways:

1. Standing committees are permanent. These committees conduct business year-round.
2. Special committees conduct specific business on an ad hoc (as needed) basis. These committees are charged with a specific task and dissolve when the business they were charged to do is complete.

Each Hillsmere PTA Committee (or activity) is assigned to a specific PTA Officer's portfolio. Committee Chairs must stay in constant communication with your assigned PTA Officer (e.g., liaison).

Committee Chair responsibilities include:

- Working with the committee to develop a plan of work for the school year that includes goals, action steps, timelines, and an evaluation for each activity. Share the plan of work with the PTA Officer liaison.
- Organizing Committee meetings
  - Scheduling meetings
  - Notifying all committee members (and the specific PTA Officer liaison) of upcoming meetings.
  - Drafting the agenda
  - Facilitating the meeting(s)
  - Having someone take minutes (as needed)
- Communicating with other committee chairs (possibly combining efforts) so duplication will be avoided and programs/projects will be strengthened by new ideas and manpower.
- Preparing monthly committee reports for the PTA Board. All reports should be sent to the PTA Officer liaison by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month.
- Seeking member and board approval before taking any significant action (including distribution of public notices).



## Board Basic Responsibilities Checklist

Respond “Yes” or “No” to each statement below. High-functioning boards and board members will respond “Yes” to all statements. Effective boards and board members strive for “Yes” to all statements.

### I, as an individual board member:

1. Know PTA’s mission and purpose and use them to guide my behavior and decisions.	Yes/No
2. Possess a copy of and have read my unit’s bylaws and standing rules.	Yes/No
3. Disclose conflicts of interest.	Yes/No
4. Keep confidential PTA’s sensitive information and internal discussions.	Yes/No
5. Prepare for meetings by reading all pertinent documents prior to attending.	Yes/No
6. Attend all PTA and board meetings.	Yes/No
7. Prepare and submit required reports in a timely manner.	Yes/No
8. Actively participate in all PTA meetings.	Yes/No
9. Listen respectfully and consider all sides of an issue	Yes/No
10. Help set and then monitor PTA’s goals	Yes/No
11. Play an active role in growing membership.	Yes/No
12. Read and understand financial reports, and ensure my PTA stays within budget.	Yes/No
13. Advocate on behalf of PTA.	Yes/No
14. Contribute toward a positive public image of PTA.	Yes/No
15. Mentor and orient new board members.	Yes/No
16. Develop my own skills and participate in available PTA training.	Yes/No
17. Actively participate in recruiting new board members.	Yes/No
18. Ensure my unit limits risk and is properly insured.	Yes/No
19. Ensure my unit complies with state PTA rules and files appropriate state PTA reports, including reporting of PTA membership and officer contact information.	Yes/No
20. Ensure my unit files appropriate IRS forms and state tax exempt and corporate forms.	Yes/No

### My PTA’s board, as a whole:

1. Knows and follows the mission and purposes of PTA.	Yes/No
2. Knows and follows the unit’s bylaws and regularly reviews and updates those bylaws.	Yes/No
3. Creates plans, sets goals, and works toward achieving the goals.	Yes/No
4. Monitors and assesses success of programs and events.	Yes/No
5. Measures impact of its programs and events on achieving the PTA mission	Yes/No
6. Ensures adequate financial resources for achieving PTA’s goals and mission.	Yes/No
7. Provides financial oversight and follows good financial practices.	Yes/No
8. Builds a competent board through training, recruitment, and assessment.	Yes/No
9. Ensures legal and ethical integrity by operating transparently, complying with law, and remaining accountable to membership and to each other.	Yes/No
10. Enhances PTA’s reputation and public standing.	Yes/No



## Dos and Don'ts of Partnering with Teachers

### Dos:

- **Plan together.** Working to achieve common goals is a powerful tool to build relationships. What are teachers trying to achieve? How can PTA help get families and community involved?
- **Invite teachers to join and become involved.** Ask teachers to attend meetings and provide input. Identify ways for teachers to become involved even if they cannot attend a meeting. Create a campaign specifically messaging PTA's value to teachers and ask teachers to support your PTA's work by joining PTA.
- **Identify volunteer opportunities.** Work with teachers to identify classroom and activity-related volunteer opportunities, and then find volunteers to assist.
- **Show respect.** Let teachers know that your PTA values them. A good working relationship between home and school is essential to student success.
- **Seek input.** Suggestion boxes, surveys, one-on-one meetings, program assessments, etc.—ask for teachers' input on PTA's impact and on the success of PTA programs, and encourage teachers to offer suggestions for improvement.
- **Build a team.** Informal social gatherings, game/fun nights, family sporting events and outings—how can your PTA build relationships outside the classroom among PTA board members, families, and staff?
- **Show appreciation.** Thank teachers for their support of PTA and the work they do for children. Plan meaningful Teacher Appreciation Week activities, and regular recognition of teacher's efforts.
- **Demonstrate cooperation.** A strong PTA-teacher relationship is a partnership. How can PTA help teachers? What can staff and PTA leaders accomplish together? Approach all interaction with teachers in a spirit of cooperation.

### Don't:

- **Criticize teachers for missing PTA meetings.** While teachers' meeting attendance is a good goal for a PTA, it is important to remember that many teachers have their own family activities and PTA events to attend. Also, some teachers have had bad experiences with certain parents. PTA support does not have to include meeting attendance.
- **Bribe or blackmail.** Teacher recognition or support of grade or classroom activities should not be tied to teacher membership.
- **Become an ATM.** Demonstrate that advocacy is better than fundraising to secure needed resources. Talk to teachers about their needs and brainstorm ways to make those needs known in the community.
- **Show up out of the blue.** School is a teacher's workplace. Schedule a meeting or provide notice. Be respectful of teacher's time. Do not interrupt class time.



**Don't (continued):**

- **Assume knowledge.** Schools are vibrant workplaces and teachers must keep track of more than just PTA activities. Keep teachers informed about PTA events and schedules. Ensure teachers know about upcoming fundraising or classroom activities. And brief teachers on PTA priorities and successes. Help teachers understand the value PTA brings to their place of work.



## Dos and Don'ts of Partnering with Administrators

### Do:

- **Plan together.** Learn administration goals and discuss how your PTA can engage families in supporting those goals.
- **Connect to resources.** Talk with the principal about how state and National PTA programs and resources support and enhance student learning.
- **Be respectful.** You don't always have to agree. Find a way to communicate in a professional and respectful manner with your school's leadership.
- **Differentiate.** Help school administration understand that your local unit is a separate and independent child advocacy group, part of and supported by a large and experienced association.
- **Meet regularly.** Consider a regular monthly coffee or lunch with the principal, or arrange a regular phone call. Invite the superintendent to board meetings. Stay in touch.
- **Make the connection visible.** Ask your principal to provide a report at PTA meetings, or to write an article for your PTA's newsletter or post for the PTA blog. Plan an open-to-all "chat with the principal" or "coffee with the superintendent."
- **Engage families.** Share the National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships materials. Collaborate on building better family engagement and improving student success. Consider registering in the National PTA School of Excellence program.
- **Engage community.** Invite community groups or youth-serving organizations to the school for PTA events. With the principal, identify community service opportunities for families.
- **Encourage participation in the budget process.** Give parents the info they need to effectively advocate during budget time. Help parents support the education budget.
- **Stay on the same page.** Follow up all phone calls and meetings with an email summary of what was discussed and confirmation of any action steps to be taken by the PTA or administration.
- **Ask to speak at teachers meetings.** Ask to be treated as a partner in education, a vital part of the connection between home and school.

### Don't:

- **Be adversarial.** Developing a working relationship is well worth the effort. Find common ground. Model civil discourse, even if it is difficult to deal with administration.
- **Comingle funds.** Mixing private and public funds is forbidden. No PTA funds should ever be deposited in a school account and no school funds should find their way into a PTA account.
- **Give up control of the checkbook.** PTA is a separate entity from the school. PTA funds are controlled by PTA members and board. The checkbook resides with the treasurer.





## Don't (continued):

- **Cede control of PTA meetings.** All members—even administrators—have the same rights at meetings. The PTA meeting is run by the PTA President or the president's delegate, in compliance with PTA bylaws and using Robert's Rules.
- **Get in trouble with the IRS.** Know the rules and file the proper forms with the IRS. PTA's funds are not school funds; do not use the school's EIN. Consult your state PTA if you have questions.
- **Open your PTA to theft.** No administrator wants to deal with the negative publicity surrounding a PTA's poor money management. Use good business judgment, ensure financial reports and audits happen, and follow your state PTA's rules about money-handling.
- **Entangle administration in personality issues.** Sometimes personal issues interfere with PTA function. To maintain a professional, credible relationship with administration, work through your personal problems without involving administration. Seek help, if necessary, from your state PTA.
- **Become an ATM.** PTA funds are raised to further PTA's mission and goals, not to supplement school budgets. Collaborate with administration, but do not allow your PTA to be viewed as a bottomless source of funding available for all administration requests. Raise awareness rather than raise funds.



# Hillsmere PTA



## PTA (Parent Teacher Association) needs you!

Here is how you can work with the Hillsmere PTA to help our students.

### JOIN

Membership is **only \$10** per person. Return this form with cash/check payable to *Hillsmere PTA*, or join online at [www.hillsmerepta.org](http://www.hillsmerepta.org).

Member #1/Email:/Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Member #2/Email:/Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name/Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to subscribe to the weekly HES e-mail newsletter, The Buzz

### VOLUNTEER

The PTA is **100% volunteer run**. We still need volunteers for the following events and activities. These programs are in danger of being scaled back. Can you help with:

- |                             |                              |                     |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| ___ Fun Fair/Silent Auction | ___ Hillsmere Publishing Co. | ---Dining Night Out |
| ___ Student Clubs           | ___ Family Fun Nights        | ___ Spirit Wear     |
| ___ Room Parents            | ___ Book Fair                | ___ Holiday Bazaar  |

### DONATE

PTA funds rely **entirely** on fundraising year-after-year. Please consider a tax exempt donation with 100% of the funds being put towards PTA initiatives including field trips, student assemblies, clubs, classroom materials and much more. Donations can be made online at [www.hillsmerepta.org](http://www.hillsmerepta.org) or via cash/check payable to *Hillsmere PTA*. For example:

- Approximately \$375 is enough to provide 1 bus for a grade level field trip (2 buses needed for each)
- Approximately \$220 is enough to sponsor 1 class with free books at our book fair
- Approximately \$50 is enough to provide 1 student in need with Backpack Buddies food each weekend for 1 month
- Approximately \$15 is enough to sponsor 1 classroom supply pack (including hand sanitizer, tissues, wipes, etc. no longer included on the school supply list but still needed by teachers)

### FOLLOW

Questions?

Contact Erin Snell at [hesptamember@gmail.com](mailto:hesptamember@gmail.com).



Hillsmere Elementary PTA

**Website:** [www.hillsmerepta.org](http://www.hillsmerepta.org)  
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